

# THE GREEN CALDRON

A Magazine of Freshman Writing



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THE GREEN CALDRON is published four times a year by the Rhetoric Staff at the University of Illinois. Material is chosen from themes and examinations written by freshmen in the University. Permission to publish is obtained for all full themes, including those published anonymously. Parts of themes, however, are published at the discretion of the committee in charge.

The committee in charge of this issue of THE GREEN CALDRON includes MARJORIE BROWN, HOWARD REUTER, ROBERT STEVENS, HARRIS WILSON, and GEORGE CONKIN, Chairman.



THE GREEN CALDRON

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# Sentiment Rears Its Ugly Head

CHARLES BROUGHTON

*Rhetoric 102, Theme 13*

ONE OF THE MORE POPULAR WORDS IN MODERN LITERARY criticism is *sentimentality*. Literally, this word means emotion-alism. This, we are told, is the literary equivalent to the bubonic plague, which the well dressed twentieth-century American author will avoid at all costs. The good little twentieth-century American author will retire to his garret and write bad imitations of Ernest Hemingway.

Pardon my sacrilege, but I think this sort of thing has gone on quite long enough. Ever since the very beginnings of American literature, there has been a tendency to pedestal things European. From this perspective, "European" has developed several connotations which make unfortunate models—a cool aloofness, sophistication, etc. The European plane is something devoutly to be wished—something a little above the crudeness of the New World. The unfortunate result of all this is that we have so enslaved ourselves to aping European culture, that it has become nearly impossible for us to be ourselves. The "American spirit" has become a very elusive thing.

Sentimentality is a part of that spirit because Americans are sentimental. Before un-American activities proceedings are started against me, let's see whether there isn't just a remote possibility that the foregoing statement is not an insult. I have already stated my conception of the literal synonym of sentiment, that is, emotion. Sentiment is some degree of emotion. To get more specific, sentiment implies the higher, more refined emotions, such as sympathy, tenderness, and sensitivity. Now what is so horrible about that? Oh, I grant you, the enemies of sentimentality are pitted against the extreme case—where emotion overrules the reason, and it's the sentimental author they loathe, not the sentimental plot or incident. But I will not grant that this is justified. I praise the skillful sentimental author. If he can jump all the emotion out of an incident, I cry hooray. It is only the unskillful, "gushy" author who is to be damned. He is to be damned, not because sentimentality is involved, but rather because bad writing is involved, which is quite another thing.

In their book, *Modern Rhetoric*, Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren condemn Bret Harte for a piece of sentimental writing. The following is the passage in question. It describes the last days of an innocent and of a prostitute.

"The wind lulled as if it feared to waken them. Feathery drifts of snow, shaken from the long pine boughs, flew like white-winged birds, and settled about them as they slept. The moon through the rifted clouds looked down upon what had been the camp. But all human stain, all trace of earthly travail, was hidden beneath the spotless mantle mercifully flung from above.

"They slept all day that day and the next, nor did they waken when voices and footsteps broke the silence of the camp. And when pitying fingers brushed the snow from their wan faces, you could scarcely have told from the equal peace that dwelt upon them which was she that had sinned."

Messrs. Brooks and Warren begin their criticism by pointing out an unspeakable crime. Mr. Harte "in his anxiety to stress the pathos of the scene and the redemption of the fallen woman, is not content to let the scene speak for itself." Think of that, he went so far as to interpret the scene! What's worse, he uses "pseudopoetic language"! Just exactly what, I would like to know, is "pseudopoetic language"? An affected term invented to cover up a weak argument, I think, or perhaps I have been wrong in thinking that language rich in poetic imagery and connotation is a supreme and rare virtue. I must be sadly behind the times, indeed. As a proof of which, I had better hurry to locate that catalogue of words which belong so exclusively to poetry that to use them elsewhere brands one as a "pseudo." Finally, Harte is accused of making a deliberate effort to arouse the reader's emotions. Need I go on? The authors' big criticism is, of course, that the situation doesn't warrant the emotion aroused. Good heavens! There is no earthquake, no seven county flood, merely the death of two human beings. Can you imagine anyone getting all worked up over that? I think this illustrates to what extremes this dread of sentiment has led us.

Let's break down these poses, this assumed *ennui*. When the point is reached where death is not considered a sufficient motivation for excessive emotion, I think it's about time, don't you? Surely the American people are not that cold blooded. If literature is to be an expression of the people, surely such suppression should not be one of its regulations. Sentiment is not an unmanly trait. It is a fundamental human quality—nothing to be ashamed of. Those who condemn it—or even those who condemn an occasional excess of it—are merely exhibiting their own affectation.

If there is anyone who doubts that sentimentality is a part of the so-called American spirit, let him look at the spontaneous period of American literary endeavor—the period before we had learned artifice—the period of tent shows and showboats. This was before we had time or desire to compare ourselves to our "European betters" of literature—before we learned to suppress natural exuberance. What did our grandmothers and great-grandmothers read and see and hear? *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, *East Lynn*, *He Still Pursued Her*, *Ten Nights in a Bar Room*. But that was all a long, long time ago, you say? Not so long. But, all right, did you not listen to the six-or-seven-plot variation Lone Ranger programs when you were a child? Don't the "good-girl-goes-wrong-and-is-forgiven" stories sell millions of copies every year? No, Americans are a sentimental people.

I know of at least one modern, purely American expression that has not denied this; Jerome Robbins' short ballet, *Interplay*. It is a very mature work—a little beyond the concept that in order to illustrate the American



spirit you have to have cowboys and Indians. In fact, it has or suggests no locale and is set in no romantic period of the historic past complete with convenient traditions. The ballet makes many comments on the American character, among them breeziness, energy, spontaneity, inventiveness, playfulness, competition (particularly physical competition, sometimes going to the "show-off" extreme), unconventionality, and last, but not least, sentimentality. I say 'not least' not just because it is the specific quality I'm dealing with; the sentimental *pas de deux* (appropriately accompanied by dance-hall blues) has real choreographic emphasis—and incidentally usually draws the loudest applause.

Symbolic theatre is one of my favorite varieties, and understatement a la Hemingway requires much the same sort of "audience participation," so Mr. Hemingway has a place on my bookshelf. But real skill in consistent understatement is a rather rare individualistic gift. To hold it up as a goal to any large group of writers is a mistake. We'll get stuff like this: "He looked at the huge gash in his side. There was pain. He watched the blood gushing out of the wound and trickling down over his new, blue suit." Don't you think this can come as close to being a bubonic plague in literature as sentimentalism can?

## On the Threshold of Eternity

ANN LANKFORD

*Rhetoric 101, Theme 1*

ONCE SAW A PAINTING WHICH, BECAUSE OF ITS STARK realism and tragedy, I have never been able to forget. It is called "On the Threshold of Eternity" and pictures an old man sitting by a dying fire, with his face buried in his hands, and fear and foreboding in every line of his body. The picture is so realistic because there are many old men like that, men who reach an age late in life where they stop and wait in the empty present of their existences, reaching back longingly into the past and dreading to raise their eyes to the future. And it is because of these men that I consider my grandfather more than slightly remarkable. For his present is not filled by that foreboding or resigned patience, but by the still tangy taste of life and what it has to offer.

The resiliency of youth is perfectly illustrated by his physical resistance. Fifteen years ago, at the age of seventy-one, my grandfather fell from the high upper branches of a cherry tree. With his feet planted supposedly firmly on the top rung of a ladder, he was reaching out in his customary vigor when his foot slipped and he plunged down twenty or thirty feet to the concrete sidewalk. Later, outside Grandpa's bedroom door, the doctor shook his head somberly at my grandmother and warned her that her husband

would probably never walk again. A year later Grandpa was making his habitual daily trip to town without the aid of cane, crutches, or any other such "nonsense."

Today at the age of eighty-six, Grandpa has finally condescended to employ the use of a cane, but he slaps it down briskly as if it were the ornament of a Park Avenue gentleman and occasionally even leaves it standing forlornly in the corner of the grocery store while he trots merrily home without it. In walking, sitting, or standing, his back and whole posture are as little inclined to bend as if he were strapped to an ironing board. "I hate to see a man all hunched over," he says decisively. "If he's a man, let him walk like a man."

Perhaps the hard, active life Grandpa has led has something to do with his seeming inability to grow very old in spirit or body. From his boyhood, his days have been filled with the necessity of hard work. In Germany, the place of his birth, he was a homesick little apprentice to a wagon-maker at the age of fourteen. When he came to America at the age of twenty, he had nothing but the skill of his hands to help him in his business—wagon-making. During these years, he himself helped to build the home in which he still lives. Although he retired from work at seventy, he and my seventy-nine-year-old grandmother still maintain their large house, and they do all the work, not only for themselves but for two other people as well. It is certainly true that his life has given him not a hatred for work as perhaps might be thought, but a lasting respect for it and for the satisfaction it has brought him.

Every piece of work and every hobby engrosses him entirely. He enters upon everything he does with the same awareness and vigor. He is an ardent ball fan, and nothing short of the house burning down can distract him from a broadcast of his favorite team. With the avidity of a small boy on the bleachers, he cheers and mutters advice, all directed to the radio at his side. He reads the newspapers from first page to last and enjoys nothing more than a lusty argument over politics. Everything he sees about him is vitally interesting to him, especially because at his time of life he has more leisure to examine things properly.

I am never able to conceive of an end to Grandpa's life. In my mind the thing doesn't exist that could defeat him. One thing, though, I'm sure of: when the end comes, it will be as vigorous and untangled and clean as the life he lived.

\* \* \*

By mixing with people, a person can distribute his character over a larger group of people.



# Grandma's Plan

EVELYN K. BOHNEBERG

*Rhetoric 101, Theme 3*

MY GRANDMOTHER-IN-LAW HAS BEEN GETTING READY to die ever since I've known her. When my husband and I first started going together, she told me, in a very confidential manner, that she was seventy-two years old and wouldn't have much time on this earth. I was nineteen at that time and seventy-two sounded like a very ripe old age to be. After a lapse of ten years, it doesn't seem quite so old.

Grandma is a typical grandma, white-haired, fat, and eternally living in the past. She was left a widow at thirty-five with a boy of nine. She lost her son seven years ago. Since almost everyone she knows has already died, she is more than willing to join them, only, however, if they are in heaven.

Last summer while grandma was visiting us she gave my husband specific instructions, even to the most minute details, as to just what should be done when she dies. The conversation between them seemed somewhat morbid to me, and I commented on it when my husband and I were alone; but he pointed out that it is the only thing she has left to look forward to, and she is planning it as younger people plan a picnic.

Out of a small income she has bought her burial plot, coffin, cement box and headstone. She has even gone so far as to have her name and date of birth chiseled on the headstone, and my husband was advised that the chiseling of the date of death has also been paid for, and that he should make sure that the monument dealer doesn't charge for it again.

A few days after that morbid conversation, grandma and I went shopping. While we were in one of the department stores, we passed the yard goods counter, and I noticed some pretty blue material. I called grandma's attention to it and laughingly suggested that it would be just the kind of material for a dress for the occasion we had spoken of only a few nights before. An hour and a half later we left the store with pattern, buttons, thread, and six yards of material for grandma's burial dress. The next day grandma started working on her dress lest she die before she could finish making it, and fearful perhaps that no one else would make it just the way she wanted it.

We have received a letter from her since she returned home in which she thanked me repeatedly and, as she put it, "It would never have been made if you hadn't been so thoughtful." She also advised us that she is now working on a blue slip for the same occasion.

\* \* \*

Fast drivers don't cause accidents because by the time the accident happens a fast driver is past the place it happened.

# Fay

RUTH TASH

*Rhetoric 101, Theme 3*

THERE ARE SO MANY THINGS WHICH HAPPEN DURING the course of one's life that it is difficult to determine just when the power of objective reasoning leaves and its successor, human emotion, gains full control.

Perhaps in the case of Fay Baron this loss of the power to reason objectively could be traced to the death of her parents. More probably, however, the loss could be attributed to the fact that she had no choice but to witness, during the first World War, the desperate plights of her family and the families of others. The war destroyed everything which symbolized stability to her. But so many others fit into this category that one cannot generalize to such an extent as to say that she suffered more than others. There are tragedies occurring daily which leave for others the same devastation that the war left for Fay. No, it is not enough to find reasons. Human emotions go far beyond reasons. They venture into the very depths of the soul. "Why" is a most difficult word to understand and an even more difficult one to explain.

Prior to the war, Fay was, I imagine, not much different from others her age. There are times, if she is not too tired, when she will retell eagerly the anecdotes of her childhood days. Most of her early life was spent on a Lithuanian farm. Nature was her most intimate friend. She knew and understood it better than anything else. Those hours spent out-of-doors, whether it was winter or summer, were her happiest. She climbed trees with the agility of a skillful trapeze artist and was not even frightened by the terror of the countryside—a large, easily-excited bull. In fact, she and her two brothers spent many a delightful hour being chased by it. Once, however, it almost caught her, and from then on Fay and the bull were vicious enemies.

Her education was limited by necessity rather than choice. At the time of the war, she had completed what would be equal to our eight years of elementary education. Because of the death of her mother and father and the enlistment of her older brother in the National Army, she was forced to stop any further schooling she might have been capable of obtaining and leave her homeland.

It was a very frightened and bewildered fourteen-year-old girl who descended the gang-plank of the tramp steamer that spring day in the early '20's. She knew but a few words of English. Helplessly, she looked about for someone who could assist her. But even these problems, no matter how perplexing at the time, were no different from those which confronted the hundreds of other refugees who were with her. Yet she could not cope with them. She became ill and could not leave the point of disembarkation for several weeks.



A new environment is something to which one needs adjustment, and although it was difficult, her natural instincts told her she must become acquainted with her new homeland and the people who inhabit it. Because of her unusual shyness, she was an extreme introvert. Nevertheless, she welcomed the opportunity of going back to school. She learned to speak English, in a broken fashion, at a relatively fast rate. Unfortunately, circumstances prevented her from continuing school, and even today a slight foreign accent is detectable.

Her friends were few, and as a result, her only companion and teacher was the aunt whose home she shared. She was never a very attractive girl, for there was no one to help her choose her clothes or to teach her how to arrange her hair. When she met the man she was later to marry, she was a shy, uninformed girl of twenty.

Her husband became ill after the birth of their third child, a boy, one they had hoped for since their marriage. When this baby was sixteen months, her husband died. She tried from this point on to bear the burden alone. Then, five years later she had to sit back miserably and watch the state officials put her children in the homes of other people. There was no finer parent in the world. She came to visit them whenever the rules permitted, and never once did she fail to bring them something with which to cheer them.

Time passed almost too quickly, and her children were growing. But during this passage of time she, too, had grown. She had grown old and tired, and although thirty-one, she was nervous, physically exhausted, and completely out of social contact. She dressed the way her meager salary would allow. She always wore practical clothing in order to save enough to refurnish a home for her children. Her once coal-black hair was already streaked with grey, and her wonderful complexion became wrinkled from over-fatigue. The only characteristic feature which she retained was her pleasingly plump figure.

She tried not to miss the small luxuries which most people take for granted, but she lived only on the barest essentials. All this she did with the thought of having her children home again. She wanted this more than she wanted the power of life. It was not until six years later that her dreams were realized and her family was once more together.

Today her neatly combed hair is almost entirely grey. She still wears serviceable black oxfords and never goes off her carefully planned budget. She often insists that one black dress is good enough for factory work, and jokingly complains when one of her children buys her a gift of a new one.

She has based the remaining part of her life on her children's success; at times, she is unable to realize that she cannot lead their lives for them.

This wonderful person, who has realized so few of her own dreams, and who has given her entire life so that her children might live normal ones, is my mother.

# The Smell of Greasepaint

ELIZABETH YEATTER

*Rhetoric 101, Theme 1*

IT'S A HALF-HOUR UNTIL CURTAIN TIME, AND THE HOUSE seats have begun to fill. The props and costume crews are making final checks, and the directors are still arguing about the blue lights in the death scenes. People with unknown destinations are scurrying everywhere, and the whole set is alive with anticipation. Now is the time for the most exciting preparation of all—making up.

A make-up kit is set out. In it are the basic materials of theatrical cosmetics. There are bases, rouges, liners, powders, false hair, and nearby, and just as necessary, lots of cold cream and Kleenex. Ready? Then let's start.

First a base is applied. It may be the old standby, greasepaint, or it may be a liquid with an oil base. Whatever its form, the base must cover all visible skin. It looks a trifle strange to see an actor whose face and neck are different shades, no matter how well they look together. The base must also be applied sparingly lest the face look pasty onstage.

Next comes rouge. Wet rouge is used for the lips, wet or dry for the cheeks, although dry rouge usually assures a more even job. Eye-shadow should be applied in dabs to the centers of the eyelids and gently smoothed outward to make the eyes appear wider. Eyelashes, if pencilled, are extended slightly beyond the outer corners of the eyes. Lashes, brows, and wrinkles follow the natural lines. Smile-wrinkles are the easiest to trace. White liner, used to accent wrinkles, is tricky, and the more miserly the amount the better. The whole painted surface is finally doused with powder, the excess dusted off, and the lips repainted and blotted.

The final complexion of the subject depends on the number of base, powder, and rouge used. These are numbered in order of lightness from one to eight. Lighter shades are used by blonds and redheads, while brunets take a darker shade, one ranging from four to six. Boys take darker make-up than girls with the same skin and hair tones. In liners, blonds take blue eyeshadow and brown pencil, while brunets take brown shadow and black pencil.

The age and physical state to be portrayed are also factors to be considered. Darker bases make the skin look more faded. Deeper hollows in the eyes, less rouge or even a touch of blue on the cheeks, less lip-rouge, and lined wrinkles all give an older look, while a ruddier or lighter base, few wrinkles, pinker cheeks, and red dots on the inside corners of the eyes tend to accent youth. To make cheekbones and nose more prominent, a touch of white liner gives the needed emphasis.



False hair is applied with spirit gum. Liberal amounts of hair are glued lightly to the skin, then trimmed to fit the specifications.

These, of course, are the most basic of rules, but they can produce an unlimited variety of effects. Make-up, however, is a dangerous thing. Too little is no good at all; too much is worse than none. The effect must be subtle but unmistakable. Skillfully applied makeup gives new meaning to a character portrayal by allowing the actor to make the fullest use of facial expressions. A skillful job will eradicate certain elements of the actor's own personality and place an emphasis on or introduce traits dominant in the personality of the character.

It's a hard task, but it's well worth the effort, for, after all, that tube of greasepaint is a key to that wonderful land of make-believe that is the theater.

## What Religion Means to Me

IVAN DAVIS

*Rhetoric 101, Theme B*

SOME PEOPLE FEAR RELIGION. SOME RESERVE SUNDAYS for religion. Some claim not to possess any religion. It is not for me to decide whether they are right or wrong. I can only say that my religion is something I enjoy. I live my religion every day and every hour. I value my religion.

My religion is in the bustle of the cities—the streetcars, the trucks, and the automobiles. I see it in department stores, in railroad stations, and in restaurants. It is in the crowds of people, surging restlessly through the streets.

My religion is in the sweet sanctity of the country. It includes the ever-patient trees, the grass, and the gently whispering meadow streams. It is in part the hummingbird, the meadowlark, and the eagle. In my religion there is room for the skies, the clouds, and the rain.

My religion is not stiff or dignified. I enjoy my religion as much on a picnic as I do in a church, or alone. It is with me while I walk to and from classes, or while I study. Still, I enjoy the dignity of a church service, for much can be gained from such a ceremony.

My religion does not need pomp or grandeur, for I find it in the laughter of children and the quiet joy of parents. I feel it in the comforting sun, and the restless breeze. It is in Jupiter and Venus, the moon, and the Milky Way. Yet my religion sees the awe-inspiring ocean and covers the majesty of a towering volcano.

Nothing is too great or too insignificant, for to me religion is a way of life, and my religion loves life.

# The Atom and I

FRIEDA WALLK

*Rhetoric 101, Placement Test*

I DO NOT HAVE A SCIENTIFIC MIND. OF ATOMS, PROTONS, and neutrons I know practically nothing. Nevertheless, I have been forced to the conclusion that these scientific terms are very important to me. I must have as great an interest in them as I have in my personal welfare because my very existence may depend on how the knowledge of atoms is employed. No longer do I blithely say, "Oh, I never could understand things like that," and continue on my way. I am taking a new attitude toward the atom because I am interested in staying alive.

Scientists, the benefactors of mankind, worked for many years to discover the intricacies of the atom. Now there are people who are sorry these facts were ever discovered at all. They charge that the scientists have gone too far. I do not share their opinion. It is not the scientists who have gone too far; it is the people who haven't gone far enough. Knowledge of the atom is wonderful, for there are many benefits which can be obtained from it. The duty lies with the people to take an active interest in the atom, to learn about its potentialities in all fields. It is this belief which has changed my own attitude toward the atom.

I am seventeen years old. In a short time I shall be accepting my responsibilities as a citizen. All around me there are people shaking their heads in dismay. They say that my generation is facing a crisis; perhaps they are right. Bewailing one's condition is hardly ever a solution to a problem, however. I want to be able to face the problem with a certain amount of knowledge concerning it. If I am unable to meet the situation, I am not keeping pace with a rapidly advancing world.

For these reasons I have listened and tried to learn. The social results of the knowledge about atoms is something I can understand. I need little understanding of science to know that my entire home town could be demolished by one bomb developed by our modern knowledge.

Yes, I realize that the atom affects me, but I also realize that it is something that can be controlled by man. We have but to use our reasoning power to this end. This is an era in which I am afraid to become frightened. I must instead become informed. The atomic age is a challenging one. I want to meet the challenge.

\* \* \*

World War III must not happen, even if we must fight in Korea, Iran, Yugoslavia, Turkey and other places for years.



# Autumn

VIRGINIA ANN STIGLEITNER

*Rhetoric 102, Theme 2*

AUTUMN IS NATURE'S MOST COLORFUL WAY OF CHANGING her mind. From the monotonous green of summer she gradually shifts to faint yellow and red. Then, her mind made up, she plunges into scarlet and vivid yellow, into rich browns and bright oranges.

Autumn is death for small boys. Gone are the lazy, joyous days of fun. Buried are the thoughts of knights and dreams of adventure. A falling leaf, a gust of wind changes his life from beautiful summer to pencils and books.

Autumn is money for an ambitious department store manager. Down come the pinks and whites, the mint greens and soft lavenders of dresses. White sandals are put on sale and bathing suits are reduced to half price. Out come myriads of sweaters and skirts in dazzling colors. The store fairly dances with autumn activity.

Autumn is football to thousands of men and women. Thermos jugs are filled with steaming coffee. Blankets and warm coats are brushed and made ready. The cheering, excited voices of fans parallel the rising voice of the wind. The throngs of people leave the stadium and scatter in all directions just as leaves scatter at autumn's touch.

Autumn is sleep for the many resort towns. Cottages are swept and sheets folded away. Canvas tops are put on the white sign which says, "Pine Tree Lodge—5 miles." The lakes are still and marred only by occasional ice-cream wrappers—remains of a lively season. The blue, spaceless sky puts on her cloak of gray, for autumn is here.

Autumn is a hurry-scurry pause for the woodland creatures, a pause before snow leaves her mark everywhere and food is hard to find. Squirrels are busy selecting choice nuts for their winter diet. Birds are preparing maps for their trips south. Yes, autumn is the busy season for God's woodland children.

It is strange to realize how reliable Mother Nature is. For century after century she has been kind enough to pause before she hurls ice and snow into our lives.

Autumn is here and I am glad.

\* \* \*

Already one atomic bum (one of the old and important ones) has killed more people than the U. S. of America has.

# What Winter Means

DONNA CORYDON  
*Rhetoric 101, Theme C*

KAREN, WHO IS ONLY SIX AND WHO LIVES A FEW houses away from me, could spend hours telling what winter means. Her words might be simple, but the many and imaginative ideas behind those words would be highly complex.

The first impressions called to her mind would probably be of snow. Snow means wearing leggings and overshoes, but who could mind when there are snowmen to build or snowballs to throw.

Snow usually means dark nights, too. But there is always a fire in the fireplace, an extra fluffy quilt on the bed, and hot cocoa at breakfast.

Snow means games that you could never play in the summer. The Fox and the Geese and the Flying Angel give lots of excuses for lying in the snow or jumping in huge piles of it. Skis, sleds, and toboggans turn a plain old hill into a real paradise.

Of course, the best thing about winter is Christmas. Nobody could help loving the tantalizing odors of roasting turkey and baking cookies in the kitchen. Only a person colder than the snow itself could fail to be thrilled by the downtown crowds and shiny displays, the carols and bells and Christmas trees. Then there's Santa Claus, everybody's friend, with his big smile and still bigger bundle of gifts.

Certainly Karen could go on about winter until it was summer, or at least until the television set interested her more than her own talking. But there is a namesake of Karen's somewhere in Chicago who could not talk like this.

Our second Karen is also six, skinny though, and pale as the snow that blows into her window every night. Pale as the bold, cold snow that makes her shiver under her thin blanket and in her little jacket, and that makes her mother sick and her father cross. That snow is the reason there is nothing to do but huddle around the stove all afternoon. It's the reason there's no food from the window-box garden, no food at all except canned meat and soup.

Karen can tell when it's Christmas too. She knows by all the bright trees in the store windows, not by one in her parlor. She knows because there is a clean special red cloth on the table, and a little present for her, and a sad, sad smile in her mother's eyes.

And somehow Karen knows that more Santa Clauses are needed in the world. When we get them it will surely be a sweet and simple matter to tell what winter means.



# Misty Morning

RICHARD WRIGHT

*Rhetoric 101, Theme 1*

THE STATION WAS PERCHED ON THE SIDE OF A DEEP cut where it watched stolidly over the wanderings of the rails in the switchyard below. The impassive, gray stone face which had stared silently at the spouting, struggling steam engines throughout their heyday now looked with the same lack of excitement on the colorful diesels and their shining cars. The old building seemed intent, listening to the big oil burners hum by or murmur among themselves as they glided back and forth along the sidings.

The station was built like a great, grey mastiff sitting on its haunches. Its hindquarters rested on the top of the bank, and its heavy forepaws reached down to brace on the floor of the cut.

It wasn't raining exactly, but a heavy fog hung in the air. The droplets seemed suspended, waiting for some passing body to shake them loose. The greying promise of dawn in the east was hardly discernible. The blanket of mist caught the gaudy light of the neons as they shot skyward from the front of a restaurant next to the station and reflected them playfully back to the ground.

The sidewalks were almost empty. A boy and a girl, both nearing their twenties, accompanied by an older lady came slowly up the street, talking. They entered the restaurant and were lost behind the coat of steam which the cool moist air of the morning had spread on the window. They reappeared shortly and walked down the street again, away from the station.

A steam freight engine pulling a train of empty coal bunkers moved slowly along a siding, leaving a trail of smoke hanging in the mist. As it passed beneath the highway bridge spanning the tracks, the smoke welled up in angry clouds on either side of the structure. The smoke tumbled and twisted agonizingly until the two clouds finally clasped hands and merged without a sound.

The boy and girl returned, this time alone, and passed through the glare of the restaurant's neons and went on toward the station. They stopped beneath a streetlight where he set down the suitcase he had been carrying and leaned against the post. As they talked the older lady drove up in a car and blew the horn. The girl looked at her watch, allowed herself to be kissed and got into the car.

As the tires buzzed away on the moist pavement, the boy stood on tiptoe to see over the row of parked taxis and waved. The reflection of the red tail lights in the wet street pursued the car around a corner and out of sight. The boy picked up his suitcase and walked into the station.

# The Pinto

JOHN MASSEY

*Rhetoric 101, Theme 4*

DAWN CAME SLOW, COLD, AND GRAY. THE WASTELAND strained under the impact of a vicious northern gale. The elements clutched and tore at my sleeping bag. Angry dirt and grit sifted their way through minute rents in my bedding and clothes. I rolled, and every jagged grain in the vast wasteland clawed me and scratched my skin. I was cold, miserable, and dejected. The northern blasts toyed with my huddled form, its iciness enveloped me. I clamped my teeth and felt them grind on dirt and sand. I tried to spit, but it did no good. Painfully I struggled to an elbow and with tired, burning eyes searched the whirling dawn for the pinto. In vain—he was gone. I dropped my head back to the hard saddle and shielded my face with a sleeve. I wondered whether I ought to get up or stay in the roll. There wasn't much choice. A shivering, hungry, and destitute animal, I crawled from between the ragged blankets. The driving onslaught struck me. I bundled up the bed-roll and reached for my boots. One of them lay half buried in the sinister, shifting sands. I turned it heel up. Millions of particles spilled out and were swept by the wind to recesses of the barren no man's land. The black traces of last night's fire were completely obliterated. Nature in time covers all. The boots were tight and rough on my feet as I drifted south with the gale. That pinto better not be far.

The whistling, swirling sand danced into my eyes, nose, and mouth. I tried blowing the irritating grains from my clogged nostrils, but always I drew in more than I blew out. I pulled the dirty red bandana over my stinging nose and parched mouth. Collar high and hat low, I trudged southward. The raging wind was forever at my back, forever clawing at the saddle and bed roll clutched in my numb and weakening arms. We had camped near an abandoned water hole. I figured the pinto would drift with the sand-sea to the south after having pulled his stake rope. He would head for the Cottonwoods we'd passed the afternoon before. Meanwhile the elements flew past my dark, haunched-over figure. Dirt and tiny plants swished past, and fanned out before me. The two-faced wind would tease the terrified Buffalo Grass, then would uproot the weakest plants and fling them southward. During the lulls I would lean back, slowly raise one foot then the other, and let the wind boost me on. The Cottonwoods loomed from the darkness on my left. I had almost missed them. Near the middle of the clump, the taller trees, wildly bowing, yielded before their master—the wind. I staggered cross-wind and fell exhausted into the scant, tempest-tossed underbrush. I left the heavy saddle where it fell—and blindly crawled toward the thicket's center. There stood the dark outline of the shivering pinto.



# Sugar is Bad for News

MARY ALICE ROSER

*Rhetoric 101, Placement Test*

TO THE FOUR FREEDOMS—FREEDOM FROM WANT, Freedom from Fear, Freedom of Worship, and Freedom of Speech—Americans through the years have gradually added a fifth freedom—Freedom of the Press. We Americans are rather proud of that freedom as any nation is particularly proud of an asset which almost no other nation possesses. But if we were to examine this fifth freedom more closely, there is some doubt that all of our claims would be justified.

We, as a people, have pampered ourselves into believing that the newspapers give us all the news, but the editors and news commentators cater to our desires by telling only those things that sound good to our ears, that lull us into a sense of security and well-being. This is never more true nor more disastrous than in time of war.

The people of America realize that they should not be told of troop movements, of special weapons, or the exact detailed plans of battle. Such a knowledge would be dangerous and would jeopardize the lives of those whom we love, upset the plans of our leaders, and bring about those very complications which we are trying to avoid. Nonetheless, the people of America do ask that the "prophets of print" feed us with war news that hasn't been diluted to take away the bitter taste. Only through the combined efforts of soldier and civilian, of man and woman, of housewife and statesman, can any war be won. The news sources often lead one to believe that the fighting man is "advancing steadily and the war will be over in a few days or weeks." Is there any incentive for the man at home to double his efforts to help the war effort when he hears daily that it's practically all over but the shouting?

Of course, the American people want to know when their army is advancing. Of course, they want to know when their army is victorious—those are their sons, their husbands, brothers, and sweethearts. They also want to know when that army has been driven back, when it didn't have enough men, medicine, and machines. They want to know what was listed in the agreements between one nation and another and precisely why certain agreements were made. They want to be spoken to as level-headed adults and to be told what has happened, why it has happened, what to expect, and what to do about it. They want to know the score.

Before we become so agitated about all the lost causes and freedoms in foreign lands, perhaps we should work on that sixth freedom—the right to hear the TRUTH.

# Sugar is Good for News

HARRY C. KARIHER

*Rhetoric 101, Placement Test*

DURING WARTIME, WHICH IN THE LAST DECADE AP-  
pears to be most of the time, we Americans pride ourselves on our  
accurate presentation of war news, from our victories to our worst  
defeats. There has, however, been criticism from some circles that we have  
been in many cases following a process known as "sugar-coating"—or releas-  
ing only the favorable news of the hostilities.

As an employee of the *Champaign News-Gazette*, I realize that certain  
parts of these criticisms are true. Yet, the grumblers often fail to take into  
consideration certain facts by which the newspaper, radio and magazine have  
been guided since Pearl Harbor.

One of the first things that a pro-realist should understand is that it is  
not so often withheld information but rather it is the manner in which un-  
pleasant facts are presented that invites criticism. An effort is made to  
feature cheery items, and to include news of defeats, casualties, or other set-  
backs in inconspicuous places. This is not always possible, but when it is  
accomplished, it does much to forestall war panics.

The calm, emotionally well-adjusted man will read or hear all of a sum-  
mary comprehensively. On the other hand, the less wise member of the public  
skims the highlights and is off to read the comics or listen to Jack Benny. It  
is not the first fellow that we fear but the latter. He will fail to catch the  
overtones and optimistic notes in bad news, and at the first sight of unwelcome  
tidings he will panic others, spreading and exaggerating his tale to unholy  
proportions.

This brings us to another important point in the news business. That is  
one of public morale. The comic-reading man, loosed in society with his  
bloated mouthings, would turn into a sort of bug-eyed monster as far as  
public morale is concerned. He would convince some, terrorize others, and  
leave the balance of the populace in a wondering, confused state. There is no  
one more convincing than a misguided moron.

If such a catastrophe should take place, the news bureaus would have to  
come up with some real fact-manipulating. This would include the holding  
back of information, and, in some cases, the telling of white lies. Such  
measures are necessary to restore a frightened people to a more normal  
state of mind.

So, sugar-coating is necessary. Man is naturally a pleasant, hopeful sort  
of an individual, and a little sweetness helps to keep him that way.



# The Newspaper's Role In Molding Public Opinion

RONALD BUSHMAN

*Rhetoric 101, Theme 1*

THE MOST IMPORTANT SOURCE OF INFORMATION ON daily events and activities is the newspaper. To find out what's at the theaters, what's going on in Korea, or what the weather will be, one turns to his newspaper, but few realize that their thoughts and attitudes are being formed and controlled by this medium.

The United States-Russia situation is an ideal illustration of the above. Our general attitude toward Russia has certainly changed in the last five years. After World War II Russia was more or less a "hero," being victorious over Germany and being an important card in the deal for peace. But now the cards are well shuffled and through propaganda and other influences, Russia is at the bottom of the deck so far as we are concerned. Also many words have taken on new meanings as a result of association and the careful work of newspapers. Communism no longer is merely a form of government, but it now represents something evil or vicious; to be called a "Red" is the worst possible insult. But how did all of this come about? How did Russia become a villain in the eyes of Americans? The answer lies in the conglomeration of facts and propaganda put forth by newspapers, other periodicals, radio, columnists, and others; but the dominant influence lies in the newspaper, for it reaches more people than all the others put together.

Perhaps the most important and efficient method of forming public opinion lies in the headlines—the emphasis and the way they are stated. Recently the *Daily Worker*, which is the mouthpiece of the Communist party in America, stated a United States bombing in Korea as: "Korean Civilians Slaughtered by MacArthur Bombs," while the average American paper would report it as: "United States Nears Victory with Bombing of Reds." Thus, the reader receives different implications from the two headlines reporting the same incident. Results are also acquired by keeping Russia in the headlines. In the last three months news and propaganda about Russia have rarely been subordinated.

Another part of the newspaper which greatly influences public opinion is the editorial. Here the newspaper gives its policies to the reader. Here ideas are presented which can directly and quickly change and develop the readers' attitudes. However, most readers realize that the viewpoints presented in editorials are entirely personal and generally reflect the position of the paper;

therefore, editorials are not as powerful in forming public opinion as are the headlines and ways of presenting the news.

Another method of molding public opinion is by the means of word association. Newspapers, by always connecting "Reds" or Communism with something immoral, have brought new connotations to many words.

In Russia, newspapers also have a strong influence on the people's minds. While American newspapers attempt to present all the news, Russian newspapers print only certain carefully selected parts of the news and leave the rest up to the individual's imagination. The result is inaccurate and to Americans often ludicrous.

Usually the newspapers' efforts result in a greater degree of nationalism. The American attitude toward the United States and Russia situation has become synonymous with the idea of right versus wrong. A general antagonistic attitude toward Russia has been achieved because this attitude promotes nationalism.

The newspaper has succeeded in forming the attitudes of Americans and continues to influence public opinion from day to day.

## Seven Come Eleven

CAROL STEWART

*Rhetoric 101, Theme B*

NUMBERS HAVE ALWAYS HELD A FASCINATION FOR mankind. Through the ages numbers have been thought to possess power for good and evil. The greatest inconsistency in this kind of thinking is that a number considered lucky by one group may be avoided as an ill omen by another.

Almost all the numbers have power attributed to them, sometimes for good, sometimes for evil. Four in particular seem to be fairly universal in their portents. They are two, seven, eight, and thirteen. The numbers two and eight are practically always considered bad luck. The Pythagoreans made eight the symbol of death, and the modern term "behind the eight ball" carries out this same idea.

Two is the most abused of all the numbers. The kings of England who were the second of any name seemed to have met with misfortune. In card games the "deuce" is often a bad hole card. Many people will refuse a two-dollar bill, while others immediately tear off a corner to ward off the curse. This tendency to mutilate two-dollar bills is the despair of the treasury department. One of the reasons for this general antipathy toward the number two may be its nickname "deuce," which seems to suggest evil because of its connotation of the devil.



Seven is supposedly one of the most powerful numbers. Wherever superstition involving numbers exists—and that includes the entire world—seven plays a prominent part. In East India, for instance, the natives refuse to work six days and rest the seventh. They believe that would be calamitous. Instead, they rest on the eighth day, missionaries notwithstanding. To the Hebrews seven was a sacred number. The Bible is full of the number seven. God made the earth in six days and rested on the seventh. Likewise, “there were seven years of plenty, and seven years of famine; Jacob served Laban seven years for Leah and seven for Rachael, and his children mourned for him seven days at his death. There was a whole complex of sevens involved in the fall of Jericho—on the seventh day the city was encompassed seven times by seven priests bearing seven trumpets. Balaam demanded seven altars, with seven bullocks and seven rams; Elijah sent his servant seven times to look for rain; and Elisha healed Naaman of leprosy by making him wash seven times in Jordan. Later we find Jesus casting out seven demons from Mary, speaking seven words from the cross, and commanding his followers to forgive their enemies, not seven times, but seventy times seven.”<sup>1</sup> The Greeks, too, considered seven lucky as did (and do) many other races. Our week is based on this same belief in the potency of the number seven.

Thirteen is usually considered unlucky. Many buildings have no thirteenth floor; either the number is skipped, a mezzanine numbered 12A is built instead, or some other device is employed to avoid the necessity of using the number thirteen. Also, most hotels and office buildings have no room number thirteen on any floor, for the simple reason that it would be extremely difficult to rent. Many people will leave a dinner rather than eat at a table where thirteen people are seated. A disturbing thought for anyone who fears the number thirteen is to be found in an examination of the Great Seal of the United States—it has thirteen stars and thirteen bars; an eagle, with thirteen feathers in its tail, holds in its left claw thirteen arrows and in its right an olive branch bearing thirteen leaves and thirteen olives, and the motto *E Pluribus Unum* contains thirteen letters.

In general, odd numbers are considered lucky. Although this idea varies slightly in some areas, and thirteen is a general exception, these irregularities only prove the rule. There is great disagreement, however, in just what kind of good or bad fortune the various numbers foretell. This, of course, is due to the fact that there is no real basis for the belief in numerical omens. Coincidence, fear, and a great desire to be “forewarned” and therefore “forearmed” have led mankind through the centuries to set up some system, no matter how fallacious, of determining the future. Numbers, with their great propensity for mystery, are a natural choice for the superstitious.

<sup>1</sup> Breton Berry, *You and Your Superstitions*, Columbia, Mo.: Lucas Brothers, 1940, p. 131.

# Chicago and I

MARLENE GEIDERMAN

*Rhetoric 101, Theme B*

WONDERS NEVER CEASE IN THE EXCITING CITY OF Chicago. From as far back as I can remember, this metropolis, with its assorted figures, smells, and dialects, has been my home. Yes, it has been my home, as well as that of my parents and friends, and if I ever leave this city for even a short time, I always leave some part of myself behind.

Funny how something like a city can grow in your system and never leave you at peace. At night when I step out onto the back porch and see the reddish tint of the sky, then I know that the steel mills are working overtime.

During the day, I walk down to the dunes; thousands of people are trying to escape the heat by sitting on the hot sand—licking popsicles.

It is August, 1950; Dave and I have just heard the Grant Park Concert through to the end, and the "Moonlight Sonata" lingers in my ears. The grass has a warm, wet smell to it that kind of tingles my nostrils and makes me feel strange—a little tense. Walking down toward Buckingham Fountain, which is now, with its many colors, in full force, I can see the Chicago skyline off Lake Michigan, and as the Palmolive Beacon sweeps a circle around us I know that as soon as possible we will make our own home in this wondrous city.

Yes, Chicago! Riverview on a Saturday afternoon! The crowds shove themselves in and out, and for a thin dime anyone can get a million death-defying thrills. Mary wants an ice cream cone, Jackie wants the Merry-Go-Round, and Mama's patience is almost at an end. And what do I want? Well, just win another Kewpie Doll for me, dear, and then we'll go home.

Walking down Roosevelt Road, I see assorted windows; I come in contact with assorted smells. The pushcart peddler and the high school boy, the hoodlum and the priest, the easy woman and the righteous reformer; all can be seen on this same street, and because of these people, it's a wonderful street. I often get hungry, however, because any restaurant in this vicinity is just the place for the wondrous delicacy, a hot corned beef sandwich with a big pickle. Yet, somehow, I forget the vile language and the dirty streets, the hoodlums and the pickpockets, and the different races and religions, and I remember that these are the people that make up my city, and I love them.

Michigan Avenue, with its skyscrapers and exclusive shops, is truly a magnificent street. This street of dreams has people there too, but, somehow, I know that they are far above my reach. As the limousines speed by, I wait for my bus, and I have an uncomfortable feeling in my heart, but deep down



inside of me, I know that in Chicago there is equality, and the shoe shine boy may one day be mayor.

Lincoln Park has always meant a picnic lunch, a camera, and a visit to the zoo. There, people can forget world problems, junior can forget his homework, and sweethearts can fall in love.

But the happy August days have at last run out, and now Chicago and I are separated for a while. Soon, however, we'll be back together again, and the part of me that's in Chicago, I hope, will help me to appreciate my new surroundings and make me a better person.

## A Week End in My Home Town

SHIRLEYANN JONES

*Rhetoric 101, Theme 2*

SIX MILES FROM THE JUNCTION OF THE LITTLE WABASH and the beautiful blue Ohio, so-called by those who have never witnessed its annual rampages, a Southern Illinois farming community snuggles comfortably against the edge of the Ozark foothills.

If anyone should chance to stray from the main highway, Route One, and drive slowly into the thriving little town of eleven hundred souls, a spanking white sign would proudly inform him that he is now entering the popcorn center of the world! Awarding due respect to that significant piece of news, he would continue down the road, and if his eyes wandered past the Pabst Blue Ribbon advertisement shouting for its share of attention on the opposite side of the smooth pavement, he would quietly and gravely be reminded that he is invited to attend the Presbyterian Church this Sunday.

Fields still green prove emphatically to the driver that he is no longer in upstate Illinois; forests that swallow dusty lanes, meandering innocently from the paved road, make a last desperate attempt to fight winter while the wind tugs at the few remaining leaves until they flutter gaily in the soft Indian summer breeze and then float gently to the ground.

A picturesque Roman Catholic Church extends a welcome from the distance; a gold cross atop the steeple gleams in the sunshine. A fleeting glimpse of Zirklebach's Junk Yard, punctuated by a mass of rusty machinery, and the driver is in Ridgway—my home town.

This, briefly, is the greeting I receive each time I return for a week end at home, varying only with the seasons; and the same warm feeling always comes rushing back.

My home town recalls a flood of nostalgic memories. I meet old friends, renew high school acquaintances; sometimes I am pleased to find that there are so many who have remained the same; other times I am startled at the vast changes in others. The Sunday School superintendent pauses to chat,

and then the window of the insurance office in which I spent one year trying mightily, but vainly, to satiate the whims of a temperamental Irishman with my feeble efforts to understand and carry out the noble art of writing insurance policies, twinkles knowingly at me. I wave jauntily at the unfortunate girl who has filled my vacancy and continue my merry way home.

When I find Daddy sentimental as ever and just a trifle pessimistic over his daughter's college career, Mamma a bit concerned but making a futile attempt to hide the faintest sign of anxiety, and Don eager to tell me the major details of an engineering job and reluctant to speak of his romantic life; I realize once more how really fortunate I am to have such an understanding and truly wonderful family.

The Friday night thrill of an exciting basketball game rushes back as I sit crammed among a screaming crowd of bobby soxers and root for the home team with almost as much enthusiasm as I had during my cheerleading days in high school. A funny sensation spreads over me. There is a catch in my throat while I keep my eyes trained on the younger brother of an old beau as he races down the floor for a trick shot. I look for and find familiar faces, and I'm shocked when I hear that a former girl friend is planning a fall wedding and another one is fervently hoping that she will too.

Afterwards I stroll past the confectionery, packed and overflowing with the victorious mob, and the blare of a juke box beckons intermittently as the door slams open and shut. I linger momentarily and then begin the short walk home, preferring mother's steaming hot chocolate and just-melts-in-your-mouth coffee cake. We spin a few records, protest at the hour, and soon I climb the stairs to my room and let the first hesitant pattering of raindrops from a shy little shower lull me to a dreamless sleep.

The aroma of coffee wafted up the stairs and into my room awakens me, and I realize with a start that the sun tumbling through my yellow denim drapes can only mean that it is rapidly becoming high morning. I slip into my robe and slippers and literally trip down to the kitchen for a leisurely Saturday morning breakfast, traditional with the family. Crispy fried chicken, fried potatoes, brown flaky biscuits, golden waffles, home made butter, and maple syrup straight from New Orleans are on the menu.

Saturday morning duties, innumerable trips up town, phone calls, duty visits, Saturday afternoon nap, and finally porcupine meatballs for supper keep the day fairly buzzing.

For the entertainment of the evening, Roy and I take in the local Western, three years old, and then drive over to the Townhouse for refreshments—refreshments including sandwiches, french fries, and thick chocolate malts. We return home early to insure our presence in church the next morning; at the door he kisses me goodnight too few times and departs.

Sunday morning means church and Sunday School, and I dress in feverish haste in order to avoid the embarrassment of tip-toeing up the aisle of the



Presbyterian Church during the first hymn. Streams of light, stained by the window panes fall softly across the impressionable face of a tiny girl sitting intently in the front pew, and I think how quiet and holy she looks, how absolutely pure she is, and how free from petty grievances she must be.

The services over, I chat only briefly with some friends, give a report to the minister, and hurry out to the car. We fly over to catch the fast passenger train and arrive as it clamors into the station. Hurried goodbyes are said accompanied by traces of tears; Mamma and Daddy remind me one more time to write more frequently; I promise, and with a final hug from all, I dash up the high steps, hastily find a vacant seat next to a window, and wave goodbye until another week end at home.

## A Friendly Game of Poker

ROBERT S. HOFFMAN

*Rhetoric 102, Theme 4*

IT'S A COLD, DREARY, AND FRIENDLESS NIGHT IN THE twin cities of Champaign-Urbana. The winds sweeping across the Boneyard try to penetrate the thick walls of the Iam A Foole fraternity house. Again and again the winds hurl themselves against the sides of the old Colonial style house only to bounce off. Inside, the cheery, always friendly boys of this great "frat" are gathered around the cheery fireplace in a jolly "bull" session.

A stranger coming into this room would be impressed by the way these boys always agree, even though the other fellow may be wrong, in order to prolong the friendly atmosphere of the house. Let's eavesdrop on their "bull" session.

"It's rather cold out tonight, isn't it, good fellows," says one of the brothers.

"Yes," they all chant back.

"You know, boys," suggests one brother, "it would be a swell night for a good friendly game of poker."

"I would enjoy a game of poker, but it must be played with the friendly spirit that is always associated with this fine fraternity," answers a jolly brother.

"We all agree to this congenial game of poker," answers one of the officers, Charles Lifeboy.

"Will one of the happy pledges go and get us a deck of cards?" asks the president of the house, Harry Ape.

A pledge shoots out of the room and returns with the cards before his image has faded, because he knows that getting the cards would mean a gold

star on the good deed chart. Because it is the first of the month and everyone has received his allowance, the stakes are exceedingly high, twenty match sticks for a penny. Even with these high stakes the friendly atmosphere still prevails. All the brothers know that money alone can't buy their friendship here at old I A F.

The poker game goes along smoothly until one of the jolly fellows thinks he sees a brother cheating. He can't believe his eyes so he casually says, "I think that one of our contented brothers at this table is cheating. I know that this can't be true, but if the someone who is cheating does it again, I will punch him in the nose for the honor of old I A F."

"I wasn't cheating and you won't punch me in the nose," shouts everyone around the table in unison.

"You were all cheating or else you wouldn't all declare your innocence," shouts the accuser.

As he shouts, he waves his hands and from one of his sleeves falls an ace. All the brothers jump at the sight of the card, fling back their chairs, and move toward this unforgivable sinner of this friendly fraternity. The sinner realizes that his error has been discovered and now he must fight. He punches in the nose the first brother that comes near him.

The first brother, his nose bleeding and his eyes filled with tears, punches back wildly, hitting an innocent brother by mistake. This touches off bedlam. All the brothers punch other brothers. Now and then there is heard the sound of breaking bones and tearing flesh. A brother jumps up on the table and shouts for peace and friendliness, but before he can finish he is hit over the head with an IM trophy.

As we slowly leave the friendly fraternity, ducking now and then from a stray object, we hear oaths being screamed by everyone. Even with the door of the "frat" closed, we still hear the noise. A friendly game of poker has developed into an open revolution of good fellows, raising to new heights their good spirits and causing several old alums, long since gone, to chuckle contentedly in their graves.

It was a cold, dark, and dreary morning in downtown Chicago. From all directions people were rushing to reach their homes before the predicted rain-storm arrived.

On the corner of Fifty-fifth Street a taxi-cab driver was listening to an address on the radio commemorating Abraham Lincoln's birthday. The significance of the address was that "All Men Are Created Equal."

A fair-haired woman laden with packages on the opposite corner of Fifty-fifth Street frantically signaled the taxi-cab. The cab-driver, completely ignored the lady, proceeded to pick up a Negro couple on Fifty-sixth Street.

The driver was a Negro.—SONIA SPIEGEL, *Rhetoric* 100.

# Comradeship

JOHN W. JACOBS

*Rhetoric 101, Theme 12*

COMRADESHIP, THE AFFECTION OF MAN FOR HIS FELLOW beings, is a character trait which my experience in World War II brought to my conscious attention for the first time, though I had experienced it in my early youth. In later years I have come to recognize its value to the individual and its need in a nation. Family relationship and love for a particular member of the opposite sex are excluded from my discussion of comradeship because I believe the emotions dealing with these relationships are of a higher order than those of pure comradeship. However, these emotions are related and one may foster or improve the other.

I came from a rather large family of seven children, and I was never accustomed to being alone. I enjoyed being with a crowd for whatever purpose a crowd gathered. Childhood games, athletics, birthday parties, camping trips and other forms of group recreation I found a source of many pleasant associations with my playmates. I liked school and all the social functions involved. By reading good books and listening to radio serials for the young, I supplemented my real life associations with artificial ones. Now I look back with pleasure upon the associations of my youth and recognize them as truthful expressions of comradeship.

My military service during World War II helped to bring the importance of comradeship to my consciousness; what I had enjoyed during my youthful associations I now recognized as the invisible bond of comradeship.

My first connection with the military came when I was accepted for training as an aviation cadet. The army gave me a serial number to identify me as a person and an M.O.S. to identify me as to class; about the same thing happens to a G.I. shirt. I soon realized that I could befriend the guy who slept in the next bed or the fellow who marched next to me. A few friendly words disclosed that both of them had the same problems and were just as lonely as I was. Later on at flying school we all had the same check rides and the same ground school examinations to pass. Failure by one of us was sincerely felt by the entire group. These men who ate, slept, worked and played together were more than just friends; they had become comrades.

Eventually I was assigned to command a combat crew. These crew members came to me first as a group of names, serial numbers, and M.O.S.'s on a sheet of paper called activation orders. Our first meeting took place on a train en route to a training base. Ten total strangers now faced the prospect of living almost as one and perhaps dying in the same manner. At first simple crew loyalty and pride bound us together; this bond grew with association and training and before long blossomed into real comradeship. These ten



men were together so much that soon the pilot's name applied to all of them. Within the crew we retained our own names, but to everyone else Sergeant Kessler soon became Jacobs' engineer and Lieutenant Bronaugh became Jacobs' bombardier.

Soon we were given a new B-24 and handed secret orders to report to the Eighth Air Force. Each of us was required to make a will, execute a power of attorney, allot his pay and complete numerous administrative forms. These mutual problems of departure from the States and the goodbyes to our families brought us even closer together under the bond of comradeship. It was evident that our crew was blessed with complete mutual trust. Each man had worked hard at the task of training and knew his job well. I rarely issued an order to the crew, for they did their work on their own initiative. Two or three of them were not especially ambitious, but they would not let the crew down through their own neglect.

Combat operations for a combat crew can be no more successful than the efforts of the crew to perform as a team. Team work and comradeship go hand in hand. The comradeship we had developed was of great benefit to us, and it continued to grow as time passed. One day our group was sent on a special mission. Our lower gun turret was removed so that we could parachute supplies through the hole, besides dropping twenty canisters from the bomb bays. Since we did not have the gun turret, there was no need for the gunner to go on the mission. Our gunner, Sergeant Bill Laseter, attended briefing with us and reported to the airplane along with the crew. He wanted to go along but could not because of official orders. Seven hours later when we returned from the mission, Laseter was waiting at the end of the runway. As we turned on the taxi strip, he fell in behind us and ran along until we reached our hardstand. I don't recall ever seeing a man so happy as he was when we started piling out of the airplane. I later learned from the crew chief that Laseter had remained in the hardstand all day and had not eaten. He was not afraid to go on a mission himself, but he was afraid for the crew to go out without him.

Several times one or more of our crew members flew with a cold when they might have avoided the mission by asking for a replacement. Two reasons prompted this action. Sergeant Laseter's experience explained how a crew member felt while the remainder of the crew was out on a mission. There was also the possibility that after the crew had finished the required number of missions any member who had missed a mission might be required to fly that mission as a replacement on another crew. Our crew completed our tour of combat without any member having missed a mission, and I was able to obtain Laseter's relief from combat duty without his having to fly a make-up mission.

A more humorous example of trust and comradeship among the crew took place near the end of our combat tour. For some time we had been the

top ranking crew on the mission board where the mission records were kept. That day the enlisted men on the crew were stopped on their way to mess by the Group Adjutant who was a major. The Major was upset because Sergeant Mitchell was not wearing a cap. After giving Mitchell a lecture for being bareheaded, the Major turned away and the boys continued on to the mess. The Major called to him again to return to the barracks and get his cap before going to mess. He also informed Mitchell what would happen if he failed to comply. After this second lecture Mitchell lost his patience and said to the Major, "My pilot can fix anything you can think of." It was good to know that Mitchell had that much faith in me, but also it was a little disconcerting to be placed on the spot. A couple of days later my Squadron Commander called me in to show me the letter he had received. He was having a big laugh about it. His indorsement to the letter stated that the group needed more crews like ours and fewer majors like the Adjutant.

Sergeant Kessler was the ranking enlisted man on the crew. Although he hated flying, he was the best engineer in the squadron. After he had pre-flighted an airplane, there was no doubt as to its condition. When we flew our last mission, Kessler informed me that it was his last flight. I asked him why he wanted to quit now that the worst was over. He said that since the crew would be disbanded when we returned to the States, he didn't want to fly with any other crew in combat or out of combat.

Our crew arrived home in the States on December 23, 1944. We reported to Fort Dix where the official bonds of our crew were dissolved by inactivation. There were tears in the eyes of ten men who said good-bye that morning, tears that even the joy of being home for Christmas could not dispel.

Out of this experience with my crew has grown a genuine affection for the human race. Often when a first impression causes me to look upon someone with disfavor, I can at least defer judgment by thinking that maybe this is another Bill Laseter or another Joe Kessler whose true character I will come to know by closer association. There is some good even in the worst of us. I have learned to look for the good and to try not to notice that which is not.

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As he squinted down the long, white coral landing strip, fascinated by the infinite number of heat waves squirming toward the blistering sky, a jeep started across. It had been a normal enough appearing jeep until it drove onto the coral strip. Now it appeared to be put together with rubber in place of bolts as it changed from one shape to another continually while floating through the shimmering blanket covering the strip. The jeep turned and bounced toward the plane. As he flipped the sweat out of one eye with the side of his index finger, he could see that the remainder of the sweltering crew was in the steaming jeep. In a very few minutes he would be hurtling down that scorched coral strip into a fresh, cool atmosphere free from the suffocating heat and boiled stench of the jungle.—DEWEY CONNOR, *Rhetoric* 102.



## Rhet as Writ

Six months ago, if I had asked 99% of the American people what Korea was I probably would have received many different answers. The American people as a whole never even heard of this South Sea island.

\* \* \*

So this Saturday I am going to be out at Memorial stadium sitting with my figures crossed and routing for Illinois.

\* \* \*

While cleaning out the waist basket, I met the most beautiful blond in the whole world.

\* \* \*

The tractor also has a flexible production schedule where as three or four years are required to produce a horse.

\* \* \*

One advantage of a girl going to the university is she becomes well rounded.

\* \* \*

The lack of sufficient money may entail the necessity of furnishing the house with various unused pieces of their in-laws.

\* \* \*

When you marry, you naturally want to provide for your wife as well, if not better than other people.

\* \* \*

T. V. assembly lines produce sets in a rustic manor.